

A MISSIONARY HOSPITAL IN CHINA

By MRS. FRANCIS E. CLARK



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A MISSIONARY HOSPITAL IN CHINA.

BY HARRIET A. CLARK.

CHARACTERS.

DOCTOR.

ABOUNDING HAPPINESS.

SAH-LAK, led in by a friend.

MRS. WANG.

MR. LIN-CHING.

MR. MENG AND HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER.

THREE BLIND WOMEN, led in by a friend.

MRS. AH WONG.

MRS. WON LING.

MRS. AH-SOO.

FIELD-WOMAN, MRS. HOP SING.

SICK WOMAN AND FRIENDS.

(A room in a hospital. Enter Missionary Doctor and one Chinese helper named Abounding Happiness.)

Doctor. I am almost hoping, Abounding Happiness, that we shall not have many patients to-day. Yesterday there were so many! I was so disappointed that I had to send so many away unhelpt that I was quite discouraged last night.

Abounding Happiness. Yes, it is true that some had to go away without the help they hoped for; but it was their own fault, because they had waited so long before coming. I wish they all knew that you would not do them any harm, and would come before their troubles get too bad to be helped.

Doctor. Yes, but it is not strange that they are afraid to come, and so wait until the pain is so bad they are driven to it; many of them know nothing about us foreigners, and they have been

told that we are just foreign devils who want to do them some harm.

Abounding Happiness. Yes, that is true, but some are beginning to understand that you always do them good. But here comes some one now.

(Enter a blind Chinese woman named Sah-lak, with her eyes bound up, led by a friend.)

Doctor. Good morning, my friend; you are having some trouble with your eyes, I see. Let me look at them and see whether I can help you. [*Examines eyes very carefully.*] It is a great pity that you have waited so long before coming to me; why did you not come sooner, before your eye was so bad? I am afraid it is too late to help you now.

Sah-lak. But I did not like to come sooner; they told me you would take out my eyes and use them to make your foreign medicine; but yesterday some people in our village who had been in your hospital said that was all lies, and they said that you could heal blind eyes; so I came. This eye is very sore [*touching one eye*], but the other does not ache at all; only I cannot see with it.

Doctor (examining eyes more carefully). This eye [*touching one*] is too far gone for any help. You will never be able to see with this one again, but I think I can heal the other one. You may come into the hospital, and we will see what we can do.

Sah-lak (in a loud voice and with a disappointed tone). They told me you were very skilful, and could heal blind eyes.

Doctor. There are many different kinds of trouble with eyes, and some can be healed, and some cannot; yours is one of the kind that cannot be healed. I am very sorry for you. I wish you had come to me sooner, before it was too late.

Sah-lak (turning to her friend). They told me she could heal blind eyes. I suppose she heals only her favorite patients.

Her Friend. Yes, I suppose that is so. She probably heals just her favorites.

Doctor. I wish I could heal both your eyes, but it is too late for that one; come into the hospital, and we will see what we can do to relieve the other.

(They both go inside, and Abounding Happiness arranges bottles and instruments on the table to be ready for other patients.)

(Enter Mrs. Wang, another Chinese woman, with her hand bound up.)

Mrs. Wang. Is the foreign doctor here? They told me she could cure all kinds of troubles. Do you think she could make my hand well? I have to work, you know, and I cannot do without my hand. Do you think she would be willing to help me when she does not know me?

Abounding Happiness. Yes, I am sure she will help you if she can. She follows the Jesus way, you know; and that makes her glad to help everybody, whether she knows them or not.

Mrs. Wang. What is the Jesus way? I don't know anything about that.

Abounding Happiness. Well, if you stay in this hospital, you will hear all about it, for all of our patients hear about Jesus; and, if you follow the doctrine, it will make you very happy. But here comes the doctor. I will tell you more about the doctrine after she has examined you.

(Enter Doctor.)

Abounding Happiness. Here is a woman who has a very bad hand. She hopes you can heal it.

Doctor. Let me see it. How did you hurt it?

Mrs. Wang. There is a needle in it, and it pains me all the time, and is growing worse. I have offered incense to the gods, and the Chinese doctor has tried sticking pins into me; but it only grows worse and worse. Do you think you can heal it?

Doctor (examining hand closely). O, yes, I see. The needle is still there, and the hand is much inflamed. Yes, I can help it. Now hold your hand very still, and we will soon have the needle out. [Cuts it with lancet and then pulls with tweezers.] There it comes; now we will soon make it all right. Abounding Happiness, will you take her into the hospital ward, and put some dressing on the hand, and bind it up for her; and then will you ask the Bible woman to have a little talk with her and with Sah-lak about the Christian life?

Mrs. Wang. O kind doctor, it feels better already; O good doctor, I am so grateful! O good doctor, the pain is gone! O, I thank you, I thank you, I thank you. (She bows low, and goes out with Abounding Happiness.)

(Enter Mr. Lin-ching with his throat tied up.)

Doctor. Good morning, my friend; can I do something to help you?

Mr. Lin-ching. O foreign doctor-lady, I have a very bad throat; I have a needle in my throat, and it pricks me all the time.

Doctor. A needle in your throat! Why, how did that happen? What were you doing with a needle?

Mr. Lin-ching. O doctor, that is the strangest thing! I was not doing anything with a needle. I think it was an evil spirit that stuck the needle into my throat.

Doctor. O, but there is no evil spirit that could do that. How long has it been troubling you, and what have you done for it?

Mr. Lin-ching. O, it has troubled me for more than a week. First I had an uncomfortable feeling in my throat, and I stuck my finger in just so [*sticking finger into his throat*], to see if I could get out whatever was troubling me, but I only made it worse; then I asked a man I knew if he could help me; and he stuck his fingers way down my throat; and just that minute when he took his finger out the evil spirit stuck a needle in, and since then it grows worse and worse.

Doctor. Well, open your mouth wide, and let me look at it.

(*Man opens his mouth wide, and doctor examines it.*)

Doctor. O, I see what it is; there is a bad scratch there. I think the man who tried to help you must have scratched it with his finger-nail, and now it is quite inflamed. I think a little sweet-oil will make it feel better. Open your mouth wide again, and I will see whether I can make it more comfortable.

(*Man opens his mouth, and the doctor with a feather puts on sweet-oil.*)

Doctor. There, how does that feel?

Mr. Lin-ching. O, it feels not quite so bad. Is the needle out?

Doctor. There wasn't any needle there, and there wasn't any evil spirit. It was just a bad scratch. Now you may take this bottle, and carry it home, and once in a while put a little of this oil on your throat; and it will soon be all right again.

Mr. Lin-ching. O doctor, you are so good and so wise! O, I can never thank you enough. I thought I must always have a bad throat, and you have made it almost well already. O, doctor, I thank you.

Doctor. I am very glad to help you all I can. It is because of my love to Christ that I am here to do this for you and for all whom I can help. Won't you come to our chapel to-morrow, and hear something about the Lord Christ, who has sent me here to help you?

Mr. Lin-ching. O, yes, I will surely come, doctor. And thank you for all your honorable goodness.

(He shakes his own hands, and then goes away.)

(Enter Mr. Meng, carrying his little daughter, whose feet are bound.)

Mr. Meng. Honorable doctor-lady, I have brought my little girl, to ask you if you will cure her feet; they are very bad; she cannot walk at all, and she cries all the time.

Doctor. Poor little girl! Let me look at her feet. Ah, they have been bound too tightly and too long. Poor child! I am so sorry for her. See; you have bound them so tightly that the circulation has stopped, and the feet are nearly destroyed. She can never use them any more. O, I wish you had brought her to me sooner!

Mr. Meng. But you can cure them, doctor. They told me you could cure all kinds of troubles.

Doctor. No, my friend; only God can do that, but He has let me learn how to help in many cases, and I am glad to do all I can. But nothing can save your little girl's feet now; they are too badly injured. There is nothing to do but to take her feet off; and then she will soon be free from pain, and will be able to walk on crutches.

Mr. Meng. O, but I cannot let you do that. I could never get a husband for her if she had no feet. O doctor, please cure them, and I will pay you much money.

Doctor. My friend, I would be so glad to cure them if I could, but it is too late. If I take off her feet, she will grow strong and well, and she will be able to live a happy and useful life. O, I wish you had never bound them, and spoiled the poor little feet that God wanted her to keep as He made them.

Mr. Meng. But how could I ever get her a husband if I had let her grow up with big feet? Why, we had to bind them.

Doctor. Well, I am very sorry, and I would gladly save them

for her if I could; but it is too late; you should have come to me sooner. Now all I can do is to take them off, and so save her much suffering. Will you bring her into the hospital and let me do that?

Mr. Meng. No, indeed, doctor. I cannot have a daughter with no feet.

Doctor. But she will surely lose her feet anyway, and I am afraid she will suffer very much if they are not taken off soon.

Mr. Meng (lifting up his daughter). If you will cure her feet, I will bring her to the hospital; but you shall not cut them off.

(He goes away with his crying child.)

Abounding Happiness. O, it is too bad, too bad! How that poor child will suffer! Why did n't you make him leave her, and take off her feet whether he is willing or not?

Doctor. O, you don't know how I wanted to do it. But I have no right to keep his child and to take off her feet if her father is not willing. I am afraid she must suffer terribly, and in the end she will have to lose her feet just the same. But here come some women; we must attend to them.

(Enter three blind women led by a friend.)

Mrs. Ah-wong. I have come from the village of Hong-so, and they told me you could cure blind eyes; so I have come to you. I cannot see at all. Please make me see.

Mrs. Won-ling. And I have come from the village of Sing-an, and I want to see too. Please make my eyes well.

Mrs. Ah-Soo. I have come from Honan. It was a very long journey, but I came because I want my sight again. O, won't you give me back my eyesight?

Doctor. I am afraid it is too late for me to help you, but I will look at your eyes. [*She examines one after another, and shakes her head sorrowfully.*] My poor friends, I wish I could help you, but it is too late. I cannot give you back your sight. O, I wish I could.

The three women together. O, they said you could! they said you could! O, please heal our eyes.

Doctor. O, I would gladly do it if I could, but no one can give you back your sight. But won't you go into the hospital with Abounding Happiness? and she will give you some tea; and you

can rest a little while, and let her tell you about the Lord Christ, who can make you happy even though you must be blind.

Mrs. Ah-Soo. No, we cannot stay. We must go home again. Oh, we thought you could make us see again! Oh, it is very hard to go home again still blind.

All three together. Oh, it is very hard, it is very hard.

Doctor. O Abounding Happiness, it is very hard to have to disappoint them.

Abounding Happiness. Yes, dear doctor-friend, it is very hard; but think how many you have helped.

Doctor. Yes, I will try to think of that; but I wish I could help them all.

(Enters Mrs. Hop-sing, a field-woman, with her head tied up in dirty bandage.)

Mrs. Hop-sing. O foreign doctor-lady, do you think you can help me? I have almost cut my head off, and it is very bad.

Doctor. O you poor woman, what have you done?

Mrs. Hop-sing. I was hoeing in the field, and I fell down on a sharp stone, and it almost cut my chin off. I bound it up as well as I could, and hoped it would grow better; but it gets worse and worse all the time, and they told me you could heal every kind of a trouble; so I came to you; do you think you can help me?

Doctor (examining the wound slightly). O my friend, I am afraid it is too late. Why did you not come to me sooner? If you had come in the first place, I could have taken a few stitches and put on some bandages, and it would have healed very soon; but now you have let it go so long that it has become badly poisoned, and I am afraid I cannot heal it. However, you may come with me into the operating-room, and I will do what I can.

(They go out.)

Abounding Happiness (rearranging the medicines). O, why won't they come in season? Our dear doctor-lady works so hard, and she so wants to cure them, and they wait and wait until they cannot be cured. O, I do hope she can help this one.

(Enter Missionary Doctor with Mrs. Hop-sing, other Chinese coming in as they talk.)

Doctor. O Abounding Happiness, I believe it will heal. I have cleansed it and dressed it, and I have great hopes for her. It was in a very bad condition, and had been neglected too long; but she is a strong, healthy woman, and I have done what I could, and I believe it will soon be well.

Mrs. Hop-sing (to the Chinese people who have just come in). O, the doctor is going to make me well. I came here with the flesh hanging down on my chest. The doctor only bound it up, and now it feels so much better, and she thinks it is going to get well. My family and my neighbors will be so astonished! By saving my life she has saved my whole family. I have many children, and they are all small; and there is no one to take care of them but I. O, she is a wonderful doctor!

Doctor. Yes, I hope it will soon be well, but you must come back again in a few days and let me change the bandages; and I wish you would come to our chapel and learn about the Jesus doctrine.

Mrs. Hop-sing. O, yes, I will come. If it is the Jesus doctrine that makes you so kind and good, then I want to learn it too. I want to be like you. Yes, I will come, and I will listen to the doctrine, and I will bring many of my neighbors. O doctor-lady, I thank you, I thank you.

(She goes away.)

Doctor (turning to the other Chinese people). Good morning, friends; how can I help you to-day?

All at once. O doctor, this woman is very sick.

First Woman. She can only take cold medicine, doctor-lady.

Second Woman. She has great pain, O foreign doctor; she will die if she takes hot medicine.

A Man. Yes, you must be very careful to give her only cold medicine; be sure to remember that, doctor-lady.

First Woman. Yes, do be careful, doctor; she will certainly die if you give her hot medicine.

Doctor. You must not be afraid. Western medicine is not divided into hot and cold. I will try to give her just the right kind.

(They all look anxious as the doctor puts thermometer into the patient's mouth.)

Third Woman. Is that thing hot or cold? Won't it hurt her?

Doctor. No, this is just to find out whether she has fever. *[Takes thermometer.]* Why, what has she done? She has bitten off the end of the thermometer! Where is it? *[Looking on the floor.]*

Patient. I have swallowed it, doctor-lady. I thought that was what you wanted me to do.

Abounding Happiness. Swallowed the thermometer! What ever did she do that for? What will you do about it, dear doctor?

Doctor. Well, I must say I do not like to have my patients eat up my thermometers, but I think perhaps it will not do any harm. *[To friends of patient.]* Well, come into the medical ward with me, and we will put her to bed and see what we can do for her. I think she will get well, notwithstanding the thermometer.

(The doctor and patient and one friend go inside; the others go away, shaking their heads doubtfully.)

Abounding Happiness. Now I am going to close the office before any more patients come. Our dear doctor has had enough for this morning. I hope none of the others will eat thermometers for her. And now I must go and help in the different wards. What a wonderful work she is doing, and how thankful we are that she is here!